

Irish Radio Transmitter Society Radio News Bulletin

September 19th 2021

Home Computing Pioneer Sir Clive Sinclair Dies Aged 81

Sir Clive Sinclair died at home Thursday morning, after battling a long illness. Sinclair invented the pocket calculator but was best known for popularising the home computer, bringing it to British high-street stores at relatively affordable prices. He left school at 17 and worked for four years as a technical journalist to raise funds to found Sinclair Radionics. He then became the man behind the Sinclair Spectrum and the first computer, the Sinclair ZX-81, to retail for under a hundred dollars. Many modern-day titans of the games industry got their start on one of his ZX models. For a certain generation of gamer, the computer of choice was either the ZX Spectrum 48K or its rival, the Commodore 64.

Sir Clive Sinclair, Rest in Peace.

IRTS Exam Update

The Examination Board is pleased to announce that the next HAREC licence examination will take place on Saturday 27th November 2021 at the Maldron Hotel, Newlands Cross, Dublin. This exam will once again be subject to the COVID restrictions in place at that time. Closing date for new applications is 7th November 2021. Full details on how to apply can be found on the IRTS website. The Examination Board would also like to wish all candidates that sat the HAREC exam on Saturday 11th Sept well and hope to hear many new EI callsigns on the air very soon.

Kerry Amateur Radio Group

KARG would like to congratulate 14 year old Megan Lorenz on getting her new call EI5LA during the week. She has already been very active on the air since receiving her new call. Megan has been an active member of KARG for many years. KARG would also like to wish all other SWLs that recently sat the IRTS HAREC exam well.

IOTA Contest Results

Results of the RSGB Islands on the Air contest, held at the end of July have now been published. More than 2,400 logs were submitted, including almost 800 entries from island stations. The island entries covered 151 different IOTA references, just over half of which were in Europe. This contest is always well-supported in EI and GI, and a summary of the results for the 22 EI and GI participating stations, along with a link to the full results, has been posted at www.irts.ie/iota

Contests

A reminder for those listening to the news transmission on Sunday morning that the 70cms Counties Contest runs from 2.00pm to 2.30pm local time today, followed immediately by the 2 metres Counties Contest, from 2.30pm to

4.00pm. Modes in use will be both FM and SSB, see www.irts.ie/contests for information about the permitted SSB frequencies, FM channels and other rules.

Next weekend is the last full weekend of September, which means it's 48 hours of rtty chatter on HF during the CQ WorldWide RTTY DX Contest. This contest draws over 15,000 participants and over 3,600 log submittals from around the world.

JOTA-JOTI looking for helpers

JOTA-JOTI takes place from the 15th to the 17th of October, hundreds of Scout stations are taking part including many Irish Scout Troops. The IRTS are seeking volunteers to lend a hand and an hour or two over the weekend in order to facilitate the event.

If you are interested in volunteering and introducing the next generation of Scouts to Amateur Radio, email Niall, the IRTS Youth Officer at [yota /at/ irts.ie](mailto:yota/at/irts.ie), include your name, a phone number and your County or Town, so we can set you up with the closest participating Scout Troop.

If you can't volunteer in person, don't forget to have a listen on the Bands on 15th to the 17th of October, and get some Scout Stations in the Logbook.

More information, including a full list of participating stations can be www.qsl.net/yrl/yrlwho.html found at www.jotajoti.info

CQ All North Dublin Radio Club Members and visitors.

North Dublin Radio Club Ei0NDR have received notification from the Artane Beaumont Family Recreation Center that The NDR Club premises is again open for our use from Saturday the 25th of September.

The ABFRC centre requires all persons entering their premises to produce their EU digital Covid Certificate and Photo ID at the reception desk.

This is great news for all NDR members and visitors.

Club meetings will resume at 8 pm on Saturday evenings from that date. We look forward to seeing you all there again. Club location and meeting details can be seen at www.ei0ndr.com

Communications via Laser over 5km

Engineers at Google's technology moonshot lab X say they used lasers to beam 700TeraByte of internet traffic between two cities separated by the Congo River. The capitals of the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Brazzaville and Kinshasa, respectively, are only 4.8 km apart. The denizens of Kinshasa have to pay five times more than their neighbors in Brazzaville for broadband connectivity, though. That's apparently because the fiber backbone to Kinshasa has to route more than 400 km around the river. no one wanted to put the cable through it. There's a shorter route for data to take between the cities. Instead of transmitting the information as light through networks of cables, it can be directly beamed over the river by laser.

In an effort dubbed Project Taara, X built two terminals, one in Brazzaville and another in Kinshasa, to transmit and receive data encoded in beams of laser light. "In the same way traditional fibre uses light to carry data through cables in the ground, Taara's wireless optical communication links use very narrow, invisible beams of light to deliver fiber-like speeds," their director of engineering Baris Erkman explained today. "To create a link, Taara's terminals search for each other, detect the other's beam of light, and lock-in like a handshake to create a high-bandwidth connection." The aim of the setup was to relay broadband internet traffic between the cities more as a test of the equipment than anything else.

A lot of effort went into tracking and pointing the light beam at a sensor a few kilometres away, and mitigating the effects of poor weather, interference from animals, and the like. X has experimented with wireless optical communication techniques using lasers in various projects over the years, including from high-altitude balloons in the now-defunct unit Loon.

In the past, it was more difficult to maintain bandwidth connections over large distances. Small disturbances in weather conditions, fog, or even birds flying across the laser beams was enough to interrupt internet service. Erkmen said that the latest terminals installed in the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo, however, have improved. They're able to automatically adapt and can swivel their internal mirrors or direct their sensors to adjust to changing conditions in order maintain a direct line-of-sight connection with each other. "Imagine pointing a light beam the width of a chopstick accurately enough to hit a 5-centimeter target that is ten kilometers away. That is how accurate the signal needs to be to be strong and reliable," he said.

DX News

The much sought after DXCC entity Conway Reef is on air, listen out on 160m upwards for Dom, using the callsign 3D2CR. He will be on air for the next fortnight on all modes. The rebel DX group page on QRZ.com has the QSL details.

Until the middle of next week there is a chance to work Nepal. Kiyo, JA7NQQ, is on the air from Katmandu as 9N7NQ until the 23rd of September. The single operator schedule is during 2300 to 0100 UTC and 1200 to 1500 UTC on 40 to 10m, mostly FT8 mode. His QSL information is also on QRZ.com.

Brian, N3OC, and Bud, AA3B, are on Antigua operating as V26OC and V26K, until Monday. Be listening on the HF bands and 6m. QSL via their home callsigns, LoTW or Club Log OQRS.

Gabor, HA3JB is active as 5H1IP from Unguja Island, Zanzibar, IOTA AF032, until the end of this month on 160 to 6m all modes, including activity in the upcoming CQ WW DX RTTY Contest next weekend. QSL via HA3JB.

Mike, VK4DX, will be on the air from Russell Island OC-137 in the Southern Moreton Bay Islands group near Brisbane from Thursday until next Sunday, operating on 40-15m, CW and SSB. QSL via VK4DX direct, LOTW and ClubLog.

Bo, OZ1DJJ, is active as OX3LX from Greenland until Tuesday, operating on the low bands with a vertical antenna. QSLs via OZ0J.

And from Monday until the end of the month, Janusz, SP9FIH and Leszek, SP6CIK will be active as D60AC and D60AD from Comoro Islands, IOTA AF007, using all modes on 80 thru 10m. QSL via their home calls.

Harald, DF2WO, will once again be active as 9X2AW from Ouagadougou, just north

of Kigali, Rwanda, until the 28th of September. He prepared a 160m antenna and built a Hexbeam with bamboo sticks for working all modes on 20 thru 10 meters and dipoles for 40 and 30 meters. He will also use the QO-100 satellite on 2m and 70cm. QSL via M00XO only. See QRZ.com for pictures.

Broadcast SWLs should take note of the new schedule of shortwaveradio.de. The fully licenced station is run by shortwave radio enthusiasts on a non-political and non-commercial basis, broadcasting an interesting program, frequently touching amateur radio subjects and news. The transmitting site is in Lower Saxony in the northwest of Germany. To make the best of the changing propagation conditions they now transmit daily on the usual frequencies of 6160 kHz from 0800 UTC until 1600 UTC, and on 3975 kHz 1600 UTC until 2200 UTC, well audible with any reasonable HF antenna.

The Propagation Horoscope

The ionisation is not very strong, due to a few rather sedate solar eruptions over the last week. As predicted, the solar flux was around the 100 mark, but not enough for spectacular propagation during last weekend's worldwide HF contest, and is expected to fall to around 70 during the week. The solar wind is currently at an average of 350km per second with around 10 particles per cubic centimeter. The MUF2 3000km hop distance barely reached 21 MHz last week, but there were occasional voices from the Pacific were heard on 17m and 15m, and several topband contacts to North America. 24 solar spots were counted on the 10th of this month, the highest number since end of September 2015. Expect a marked increase after the equinox, although for now only the weakenig sunspots number 2860 and 2867 will re-emerge on the eastern limb for a third spin around the sun.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam /at/ irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Friday.

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